

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8-13 and 15-17 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 6, 15 and 16 are amended, and claims 4 and 7 are canceled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Support for the amendment to claim 1, 15 and 16 can be found at least in Fig. 7 and the corresponding description. Thus, no new matter is added.

I. The 35 U.S.C. §112, First Paragraph Rejection is Moot

The Office Action rejects claims 4 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph. This rejection is moot in view of the cancellation of claims 4 and 7. Withdrawal of the rejection is thus respectfully requested.

II. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8-13 and 15-17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0018278 to Sato in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,429,962 to Yang and U.S. Patent No. 6,396,470 to Zhang et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8-13 and 15-17 would not have been rendered obvious by Sato in view of Yang and Zhang. In particular, none of the applied references teaches or suggests an electro-optical device that includes "a coating member being contained completely within the contact hole," as recited in independent claim 1, and as similarly recited in independent claims 15 and 16 (emphasis added). Further, none of the applied references teaches or suggests "a filler completely filling an inner space within the coating member, the filler being made from a transparent material and having a substantially planar upper surface in a direct contact with the liquid crystal layer," as recited in independent claim 1, and as similarly recited in independent claims 15 and 16 (emphasis added). That is, with the claimed configuration, the light shielding effects of the contact member (420), can be limited to

regions that substantially overlap the contact member 420 in plain view, as shown in Fig. 7.

None of the applied references teaches or suggests these features.

Zhang discloses a first reflection electrode 1347 that coats both the inside of the contact hole 1325 and the area above the insulation film 1331 around the contact hole, as shown in Fig. 42. Thus, the alleged coating member of Zhang is contained completely within the contact hole as recited in independent claims. Moreover, the filler 1361 of Zhang is covered by a second reflection electrode 1361, as shown in Fig. 42. Thus, the filler 1361 of Zhang is not in direct contact with the liquid crystal layer as recited in independent claims.

Further, Sato and Yang do not remedy the deficiencies of Yang. In particular, as acknowledged by the Office Action, Sato does not disclose a filler having a substantial planar upper surface. Further, Sato does not disclose the claimed coating member. Sato merely discloses an alignment layer 16 and a pixel electrode 6a that both are both transparent, as shown in Fig. 3. Thus, because the alignment layer and the pixel electrode of Sato are transparent, they cannot achieve the shading effects of the claimed coating member.

Moreover, Yang is merely cited by the Office Action for its alleged teaching of a two-layer structure including two metal layers. Nowhere does Yang teach or suggest the claimed coating member.

Further, Yang does not disclose "one of the metal layers of the relay layer being formed from a light-absorbing material and the other of the metal layers being formed from a light-reflecting material," as recited in independent claim 15, and as similarly recited in claim 17. Neither Zhang or Sato teach or suggest this feature.

Thus, for at least these reasons, independent claims 1, 15 and 16 are patentable over Sato, Yang and Zhang. Further, claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 8-13 and 17, which variously depend from claim 1, are also patentable over Sato, Zhang and Yang for at least the reasons discussed

above, as well as for the additional features they recite. Withdrawal of the rejection is thus respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Randi B. Isaacs
Registration No. 56,046

JAO:RBI/hms

Date: September 12, 2006

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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